



Attorney General Jon Bruning

NEWS RELEASE

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Bruning Calls on Congress to Restore Funding for Frontline Crime and Drug Enforcement Efforts

Note: A Sound bite on this topic is available at: <http://www.ago.ne.gov>

(Lincoln, Neb.) Attorney General Jon Bruning, along with 55 Attorneys General from all jurisdictions of the United States, today issued a letter calling on Congressional leaders to restore funding to the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program.

Byrne funds are currently the only source of funding available to local and state law enforcement for multi-jurisdictional drug enforcement, including meth initiatives, and are a crucial source of funding for drug courts, law enforcement collaboration, gang prevention, and prisoner re-entry programs.

“Byrne funds are critical in our fight against drugs and violent crimes,” said Bruning. If funding isn’t restored, we’ll see more criminals on our streets, more drugs in our neighborhoods and innocent people paying the price.”

In fiscal year 2007, the Byrne program was funded at \$520 million. For 2008, the Senate had originally funded the Byrne program at \$660 million and the House at \$600 million in their respective appropriations bills. However, in the omnibus 2008 appropriations bill signed into law in December of 2007, Byrne program funding was cut to \$170 million for the coming year – a 67 percent decrease from 2007 funding levels. Nebraska received just over \$3 million in Byrne funding in 2007.

Attorneys General assert in their letter that these cuts would devastate state law enforcement efforts by shutting down multi-jurisdictional drug and gang task forces, requiring layoffs of police and prosecutors, and cutting funding to programs proven to assist drug-addicted citizens in becoming productive members of society.

Bruning, along with Colorado Attorney General John Suthers, Maine Attorney General Steve Rowe, Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood, and Ohio Attorney General Marc Dann spearheaded the effort to restore funding.

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